

Dear Parents/Carers.

You may have seen in the media that the Government introduced a scheme to support families in the event of having to isolate due to testing positive or being in contact with a positive case. We have been asked to share the information below with you by the local Authority.

The Test and Trace Support Payment scheme has been introduced to help ensure that people on low incomes self-isolate when they test positive or are identified as a contact and to encourage more people to get tested.

From 8 March 2021, parents or guardians who are on a low income and need to take time off work to care for a child while they are self-isolating, may be eligible for financial support from their Local Authority through the Enhanced Test and Trace Support Payment (ETTSP) scheme.

For a parent or guardian to be eligible to receive a £500 payment they must meet **all** the following criteria and have received notification to self-isolate on or after 8 March 2021:

- Be the parent or guardian of the child or young person in the same household and need to take time off work to care for them while they are self-isolating; this is limited to one parent or guardian per household for the child or young person's self-isolation period. (Where there is joint parental custody the child or young person must be self-isolating with the parent or guardian who is applying).
- Be employed or self-employed.
- Be unable to work from home while undertaking the caring responsibilities and will lose income as a result.
- Be in receipt of the one of the following benefits **or** are on a low income and self-isolation would cause hardship, or they do not currently have Recourse to Public Funds, they may still be entitled under a special discretionary scheme
 1. Universal Credit
 2. Working Tax Credit
 3. Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
 4. Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
 5. Income Support
 6. Housing Benefit
 7. Pension Credit.

The child or young person:

- Must be aged 15 or under (or 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)) who attends your education or childcare setting.
- Must have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their education or childcare setting because they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

If a parent or guardian thinks they meet the eligibility criteria listed above, they can apply to their local authority for a payment from the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

This can be done by contacting their Local Authority and completing an application and providing a copy of the letter/communication from their Child or Young person's educational setting informing them to self-isolate. This letter/communication to the

child informing them to self-isolate should include where possible the date they were asked to isolate and the home address they will be isolating from.

If the Local Authority considers there is entitlement they will need to conduct checks with the educational setting before making an award. This check is to verify the self-declared information about the child and confirmation the child should have been self-isolating; e-mail and verbal confirmation is sufficient.

Note: Schools are not required to share information about the child they just need to verify the self-declared information provided in support of an application. Claims can be made by parents and guardians up to six weeks (42 days) after the child or young person's first day of self-isolation.

However due to the late announcement from the Government the Enhanced TTSP scheme did not go live until the end of March 2021. Therefore, any claims in respect of a Child or Young person with an isolation start date between 8 March 2021 and 1 April 2021, when the application process went live in Liverpool City Council, will have 42 days (until 14 May 2021) to make an application.

We would ask schools and other educational settings to inform Parents and Guardians of Children that have been told to self-isolate since 8 March 2021 to visit their Local Authority website and search for Test and Trace support payment to see if they could be eligible for financial support.

Note: To support a TTSP application parents and guardians can ask to request copies of isolation letters issued prior to the 1st April 2020. Other Local Authorities may apply different eligibility criteria for their discretionary scheme, they may also have different evidence requirements and timescales for an application to be accepted.